

provisions, ashes and other exports of the provinces may be brought to the Atlantic, not only with more speed, regularity and security than by the River St. Lawrence, but with the grand additional advantage of a navigation open at all seasons of the year; the harbour of St. Andrew's being capacious, deep and never closed in the winter season. * * * Another great line of railway may be formed from Halifax, through Nova Scotia to St. John, in the Province of New Brunswick, and then into the United States joining the railways which are fast spreading through that country, and which will soon reach from New York to Boston and through the New England States."

He supported his plan by an argument from the Imperial standpoint. He said "Indeed if the difficulties and expense of constructing these works in our North American Colonies were tenfold greater, an imperative necessity would exist for their adoption if it is desired by the Government of this country (Great Britain) to maintain an equality of commercial advantages with the neighbouring United States, for the splendid advantages of the railway system are well understood in that country, where great navigable rivers are about to be superseded by railways of vast magnitude reaching over hundreds of miles. Indeed in no country will the results of the railway system be so extensive as in the United States, for it will neutralize their only disadvantage—inland distance from the sea; and it will effect the work of centuries to connect, consolidate and strengthen that giant territory lying beneath all climes and spreading over a quarter of the globe.

"If, then, we would contend with these advantages in our North American provinces, it is only by similar works that we can bring to the Atlantic the agricultural exports of the colonies and secure the stream of emigration which otherwise, with the facility of inland transportation, will be rapidly diverted to the western regions of the United States."

Well may Mr. Sandford Fleming, in his history of the Intercolonial Railway, say "the mind which in those days (63 years ago) could judge what railways would effect and could foreshadow what has taken half a century to accomplish must have been of no ordinary kind." Fairbairn's name should be held in everlasting remembrance by the people of Canada.

In his proposal we have the seminal idea, which, falling into the minds of the people of Canada, took deep root and, growing as the years passed on, produced the results seen to-day.

331. Three years after, the people of St. Andrew's called a public meeting and the first steps were taken to carry out Mr. Fairbairn's idea. An association was formed, explorations were made and reports submitted. In December, 1835, a deputation went to Quebec to bring the question to the notice of the Government of the sister colony. Resolutions favourable to the undertaking were adopted in the same month by both Houses of the Legislature. The Boards of Trade in Quebec and Montreal appointed special committees to act in concert with the delegation. In January, 1836, a delegation went to England, carrying with them a petition to the King. The Nova Scotian Legislature, in the following March, passed a resolution similar to that passed by the Quebec Legislature, and the Legislature of New Brunswick passed an Act incorporating the St. Andrew's Quebec Railway Company.